WHAT CHRIST MEANS TO ME

WILFRED·T·GRENFELL

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By

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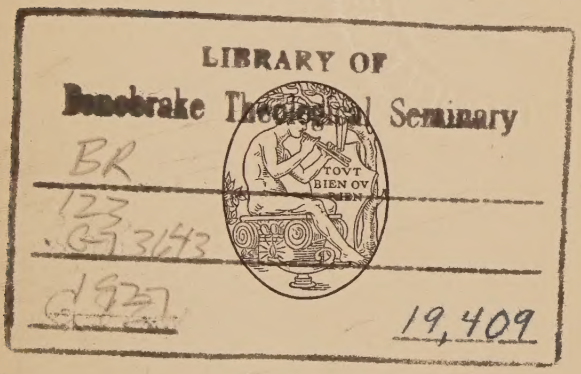
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Boston and New York
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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The Riverside Press
CAMBRIDGE · MASSACHUSETTS
PRINTED IN THE U.S.A.

PREFACE

THE experience of a journey around the world forms a good background against which to show up to one's self the problems of one's own life in their true proportions. For only by comparison in a relative world can we estimate either size or any other truth. As I write we are steaming down the Persian Gulf. In the distance the rocky coast of Persia is plainly visible. A lady having asked me how far we were from the shore, I replied, 'Ten miles.' Her estimate had been five. At that moment the captain came by and we referred the point to him. 'We are forty miles off,' was his statement.

Without the perspective that travelling gives, it is practically impossible to judge the relative importance of all those small considerations that loom so large on the horizon of the tiny section of this round world on which most of us pass the few days of our stay, to which we have given the name of 'our lives' — which, speaking accurately, is begging the question.

As one mixes, now with our fellow crea-

tures who live naked under a broiling sun, now with those clad in furs in the frigid climate of the sub-arctic, now with those who enjoy everything that life here has to offer, now with those who must live and die like dogs or flies without even enough to be free from actual want, and without any hope of ever achieving independence, one stands amazed that one could ever have laid such stress on the tiny differences of methods or viewpoints as to divide ourselves deliberately from others who are aiming at the same great objective, because in our conceit we thought that we were infallible. When one realizes, resentfully though it may be, that the same impulse must be imparted in quite different ways to two apparently similar human creatures, in order to attain the same result, it helps one not only to be more charitable in judgment, but freer to try to state openly that which has influenced one's self, as not necessarily causing those divisions or recriminations which are usually avoided by silence.

When various friends invited me to put on record what Christ means to me, I realized that to make a mere bald statement would be meaningless. In any other line of

activity, such would be rightly rated as valueless. Man knows us, and God judges us, by our records, and we can only know ourselves, or what anything has meant to us, by that same gauge. Facts are still the most trustworthy and verifiable things we know of, especially recent historical facts. Such a record calls for more time and more length than a mere category of what 'I believe,' but to my mind it is the only way possible that would carry any conviction.

Certainly, in surgery such a course alone would satisfy the governing body of the college and be acceptable as a credential on which to base action.

This is my only apology for the following booklet. Some of it may have been written previously. The conditions of incessant travel under which this record has been made have prevented my consulting previous books. The best I can hope is that the details of long past events will do justice to my memory by tallying, and that, in any event, friends will understand and deal generously.

WILFRED T. GRENFELL, M.D.

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CHAPTER I

As a boy, brought up in the orthodox teaching of the National Church established by law in my native land, religion was a matter of course and part of every gentleman's education. It produced no more personal reaction that I was conscious of than in any other healthy lad. The only effect that I can remember was that I grudged having to 'waste' one day in seven, which as we did not have to devote it to work might of course have been used for games.

Having a constitution hardy above the average, it never for a moment worried me as to what would happen if I died. I had no intention of dying, and so far as I could gather, religion seemed largely concerned with dying. At home we always had morning prayers — a custom which was tolerated rather than enjoyed. In the summer my

parents generally went abroad to Switzerland or elsewhere, and then there were no morning prayers, and the day seemed freer and longer, and the sense of restraint was removed. I should add that so also was the similar beneficial discipline of teeth-brushing.

I was not troubled by intellectual doubts. My next younger brother was very delicate, and I was unusually devoted to him. I can remember carrying him about on my back, so that he might come and share some childish pleasure with us. But when he lay slowly dying and I used to go every day to his room to bid him farewell, as I thought, every one assured me that he would be absolutely all right once he died, and I was satisfied. I was always terribly sorry for his handicap while he was with us because he could not enjoy our games and sports. I do remember being a bit surprised, however, that I was not more sorry when he died, surprised at my confidence in what every one said, namely, that he had gone to a happier home somewhere else, where he would not suffer any more.

The explanation was that we never doubted anything that our mother told us.

Her faith all through her long life was a positive, calm assurance grounded firmly on the inner authority of her own spiritual experiences. What was infinitely more important to our faith was that we boys never once knew her deeds to belie her words; we never knew her to act in anger, or unjustly. There is no denying the fact that a boy or man accepts unquestioningly from a person whom he loves that which, if he doubts the teacher in any way, his mind will challenge instantly. To the mind of every boy, the mother he loves possesses naturally sources of wisdom which are not open to him. He does not query or analyze this fact. With our mother we somehow knew that she had a knowledge of truth which we did not have, and unquestionably she had. It was the inner light that Christ says comes from following in His footsteps. Even later in life, when our imperious personalities demanded a why and wherefore from every one else, when our conceit of intellect was betraying us into supposing that if we could not with our protoplasmic brain cells comprehend or find an answer to every difficulty, we must, in order to be honourable, refuse to believe it, we still found in her assurance

something which satisfied us. Our mother was no talker or controversialist. A thousand times I have thought of that when I read of the Christ, who 'shall not strive or cry,' or in a different sense of those 'who shall not be heard for their much speaking.'

Among my treasures lies a book of my mother's which I value more than her Bible. It is her account-book summary ledger. The cares of a large school, and a family of four boys, and endless other difficulties, which, owing to the high-strung temperament of our family, complicated the problems of a quiet routine, were sufficient to break the calm of almost any mind. Nothing of this was ever known to me. Only in looking over her books after she had left us did I discover this wonderful record of her faithful stewardship through the passing years, during which we had taken everything for granted, and unthinkingly accepted all that we wanted. Here was the record of year after year, year after year, of endless patient work, uninteresting and monotonous, and all done for us. As I looked at the rows of figures, page after page, so neat, so carefully entered, and so wonderfully analyzed and balanced, in the hand-

writing which I loved so dearly, a new light seemed to open up to me, showing a great deal more of what Christ had meant to me in my normal boyhood than I had ever been conscious of. He meant a mother who brought Him right into our family life just by doing daily what He would do in her place, and unquestionably into our personal lives too, even if we were not able to recognize and proclaim the fact vocally in those days even to ourselves.

In looking back on my youth after many years I have come to feel that this attitude was as it should be. Religion to deserve the title should bear the stamp of normality; and for a boy to have been too introspective about its possession during the days of childhood might have been as undesirable as a similarly attentive attitude to the welfare of his physical digestion, of which it is wisely said he should be quite unconscious.

When I was at the public school, Christ as a Person meant little to my consciousness. Our college proclaimed its faith in established religion as an institution. We had a chapel service each morning and evening, and two on Sundays. At fourteen years of age it was the right thing to be confirmed,

after which you were allowed to stay to an after service, when the younger boys had been dismissed. I distinctly remember, however, being a bit scared when, the first time I stayed to Communion, I heard the clergyman read out, 'He that partaketh unworthily, drinketh to his own damnation.' One always supposed that most of the masters accepted the college religion in its entirety. I am certain, however, that some did not. But that did not interest me at the time enough to raise a question in my mind as to where I stood. Habit, and the fact that all the other boys had to observe Sunday in the same way that I did, made me think less of the taboo on sport. Besides, though I thank God that my troubles always came more from contempt of sartorial customs than from any affection for fashion or fine clothes, habit and advancing years led the 'sans-culottism' of my hobble-dehoyhood to make concessions unconsciously to what the boys called 'good form.' It was part of religion to wear a certain style of dress on Sunday, and that this formality had my mother's sanction was marked for me by a little bouquet of flowers for my buttonhole, that used to arrive each week-

end from home, packed by her own hand. Looking backward now, I can read between the lines and see how wise was her instinct of real love. For though Mohammedans around me as I write have no shame whatever in saying their prayers anywhere in public, and I heartily respect them for it, I am absolutely certain that wild horses would not have dragged me to say my prayers, say in the school quadrangle, or anywhere, except at the proper time and place. I have felt certain she knew and respected this.

Religion in those days never seemed to have any practical, personal bearing. We did not look upon it as a thing to apply to our reason. Thus it was a rule of the school that if you were never late for chapel you secured what was known as the chapel half-holiday towards the end of term. To have 'cribbed,' or cheated, in a class or examination in order to get the better of other boys was unthinkable, but to adopt any subterfuge to avoid losing the chapel 'half' was considered perfectly fair game. Without the slightest sense of incongruity, I availed myself of many such.

So far as intellectual doubt went I repeat we never had any. To have supposed that

any one not mentioned in the Bible could ever have as much to contribute to mankind as one included in its pages would have outraged our whole gamut of theology. To fancy that Martin Luther, John Wesley, or even the Pope could improve on the teachings of the imprecatory Psalms, or any other portion of the Bible, would have seemed simply ludicrous.

However, I have long since come to the conclusion that there is more in this habit of formal religion, which is anathema to some minds, than I used to think; though I do not forget that succeeding ages bring demands for different methods of presenting Christ to men than the way which most vitally swayed the generation of yesterday; and personally I should vote for an expurgated Bible, prayer-book, and hymn-book for boys. The shortened Psalter recently brought out through the Cambridge Press by my brother suits me admirably.

The facts of history convince me that to our family was given a temperament utilitarian and rational, rather than mystical and emotional, which resulted in generations of our forbears conceiving that their highest opportunity to serve their day and

generation lay in combating '*vi et armis*' papal infallibility and ecclesiastical arrogance. Their religion, as was the case with many other forceful citizens, took the form of sailing forth from harbours in Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall, for the lofty purposes of 'sweeping the Spanish Main' and 'singeing the King of Spain's beard.' That was honestly their interpretation of what Christ meant to them. Their methods of preaching their gospel are so far from our own to-day that we are apt in our superior conceit to disclaim any approval whatever of their vision. Yet the facts are that these were the men whose religion built empires, helped to carve out our own civilization, and held secure our Anglo-Saxon freedom. These men uncomplainingly faced danger and death for their faith, and suffered sacrifices compared with which our physical experiences for our faith are as nothing at all.

As I try now to analyze the facts, it seems to me that though religion at school was to a large degree cubbyholed, and any individual expression of interest discouraged rather than the contrary, there was no little wisdom in these restraining methods of developing character, while many serious

pitfalls were avoided. I remember on one occasion at Oxford being very much puzzled. During a largely attended afternoon tea, in the rooms of the dean of a certain college, who was also the priest of the chapel, I spoke of Christ's attitude as it appeared to me on some very ordinary subject that they were discussing. The dean was one of the most lovable and generous of men. But after the others had gone, he took both my hands in his and said quietly, 'My dear Grenfell, we never speak of these things in general conversation.'

At school, every Sunday morning, we heard read in chapel the Commandments of Moses, and we prayed mechanically that we should not murder, steal, commit adultery, bear false witness, or blaspheme. We all knew that any gentleman would avoid these indulgences, while to honour one's father and mother was as natural to us boys as to breathe. But we often forget that back of the English gentleman stand these very Commandments, and though we may have failed to see the connection we were wrong in considering their teachings as quite apart from religion, as wrong as we were in supposing that religion was meant for the chapel

and the sick-room. There was some bullying and not a little evil going on around us in the school world, though all the boys observed exactly the same religious ordinances. Undoubtedly to-day the question as to what Christ means to each boy personally is in the English schools receiving increasing attention. '*Autres jours — autres mœurs.*' On the other hand, the high ideal of being an English gentleman, working hard and playing fairly, was constantly set before us, and I have heard more than one schoolfellow in subsequent years, who broke those Canons then, confess that he was perfectly aware at the time that he was in the wrong, and that he had lived to regret bitterly, not that he did not know better, but that he did not do it.

It has been the recognition of this need of help for the schoolboy whose reticence prevents his taking his troubles to any human adviser (least of all a master of his school) that has forced the hands of all our educators, who realize that inspiration is a larger part of education than is information.

There are those who will not admit that the methods, the mode of life, the language of our ancestors, permit us to believe that

Christ meant personally as much to them as to us. But I have always felt that their heroic sacrifices, their unflinching courage, their unlimited hospitality and ungrudging loyalty, testify just as convincingly to the presence of a vision of the Christ at the bottom of their hearts as do any claims of ours on account of greater intellectual accuracy, or any professions of purer creeds, under whatever names their adherents label themselves.

The only books about religion that I can remember that were any help to me at that period of my life were those of Charles Kingsley, a kinsman of ours and at one time a visitor at our home. There was nothing 'sissy' about him. He was a born fighter, a fine naturalist, and loved everything in nature. He was a good sportsman, and his books 'Westward Ho,' 'Hereward the Wake,' 'Alton Locke,' and others featured red-blooded men. He was the first parson to give me the idea that religion made men efficient, or rather did not make them inefficient; or that religion, if you permitted yourself to discuss it, had anything beyond tradition to recommend it. It really was a relief to think that such a trusted authority

felt that nobody really 'knew it all.' He allowed people to think and to do differently, and yet be Christians. Kingsley was not interested so much in doctrines. To him a Christian was a man who cleaned out the filth in his own back yard himself, and not the man who asked God to keep away typhoid from his house while he himself did nothing. I did not read Kingsley's sermons. I never read any sermons that I did not have to. But Kingsley's religion stimulated me.

When the old British Chief was stepping into the font to receive baptism, he asked the ministrant what had become of his ancestors who had faced their last judgment unbaptized. On being told that they had gone to hell, he stood thoughtful for a moment, and then, wrapping his wolfskin cloak around him again, he said simply, 'I will take my chance with them.'

To departmentalize anything always involves a risk. In religion the danger of losing sight of that conscious personal relationship between God and man which Christ's very incarnation teaches us should exist, must be kept in mind. But the ideal, especially for childhood, is that it should be accepted unconsciously, like relationship

to one's own parents, or a good digestion. The cumulated common sense of the Anglo-Saxon mind dreads the smug, the religious smug most poignantly of all. I cannot help thinking, more and more the older I grow, that in spite of the fact that Christ was a very silent partner in the life of us English boys at public schools, He was a very real companion of many of us all the same.

CHAPTER II

The years went by busily and on that account very joyously with me. Every day seemed to offer special ventures of some sort, and in my dreams these happy days still vie with those at my school. The clinical work in hospital, or, as we called it, 'walking the hospital,' had launched me into yet another new world. The human wreckage of the purlieus of Whitechapel would make the proverbial brass image stop to think. 'The Palace of Pain,' as some one named the great London Hospital, was indeed no misnomer. Focussed there was the suffering of the bodies, minds, and spirits of thousands of our fellow creatures. It certainly made one wonder about the 'why' of it all. Only the concentration in my own daily share of the work in it prevented the question obtruding itself too awkwardly. Every day, day after day, the tragedies which the sordid histories of so many cases revealed, and which it was our first business to record, forced any one with a spark of sympathy to question the value of prolong-

ing many of the lives of the victims. The continuous stream of helpless little children that came along, hopelessly handicapped through no fault of their own, was inexplicable. At that time we could not do what common sense and a real feeling of comradeship demanded. There was practically no public-health work, no child-welfare work, no occupational therapy, no rehabilitation efforts. Those forms of everyday love for your neighbour were as entirely divorced from professional surgery as from professional religion. Nowadays, these justify more the doctors and nurses in their long struggle, and the energy and the money expended, for they do add some hope of permanency as well as some hope of preventing the recurrence of the same trouble. It was pitiful that as soon as you had weaned some little child back to health, and every one had learned to love it, you were obliged to send it straight back into the same old hotbed of squalor and vice. Many adults, on the other hand, self-degraded in body and soul, were a burden to themselves and their communities, a disgrace to their country, and a menace to their homes. It seemed almost criminal to mend up some drunken

ruffian's leg that he might go home and kick his wife again with it. In the details of treatment, of course we were interested. We knew we were storing valuable potential for the day when we 'went out into practice.'

Once I remember getting discouraged with the meaning of my own life when we saved by infinite care a man who, while drunk, had cut his throat right into his larynx. While he was under my care, I found him a most attractive personality, but at the end of it all they took him out and hanged him, for in a moment of drunken fury he had killed his wife. It happened that I knew personally quite a number of conventionally religious men who made money in heaps out of selling this degrading poison as a beverage for their own personal gain. Among these were many professed religious leaders who drank it themselves and publicly bolstered up the traffic. A cap was put on it when one night a woman was brought into the hospital on a stretcher, dying of terrible burns. The history showed that her husband had come home drunk and thrown the paraffin lamp over her. The police, the husband, and the magistrate were imme-

diately sent for. I can still see that miserable creature standing at the foot of the bed between the policemen, watching every movement of his dying wife. I can see today the magistrate stooping over the bed, warning her that she had but a few minutes to live and that within an hour she would be standing before her Maker. He kept imploring her to tell the truth, as he took down her dying statement. At last her eyes were raised to the face of the man, the father of her children, the man who had sworn so shortly before to love and protect her 'until death us do part.' Here he was now, her murderer. The silence at her bedside, as we waited for her reply, could be felt. As her eyes fell upon the familiar features, I can only suppose she saw him as once he had been, before drink claimed him as another victim. For a new light came into them, and she passed out with a lie on her lips to save him. 'My God! It was an accident,' was the last thing she said. How I loathed the man! I longed to fell him where he stood; yet it was the intoxicant that did it. It had not yet occurred to me that I could hope to do more for any man than patch up his body. Even the psychic value

of faith in God I had then little knowledge of. Much less did I dream of being able to make new men instead of only new legs, to make the morally lame, as well as the physically lame, walk straight once more.

To be able to do things, to be kind, clean of life, punctiliously ethical, and scientifically up-to-date, seemed the limit of my highest expectations. To keep my body fit, and to excel in clean sport without neglecting my work or my patients, was the larger part of any religion I possessed. I so despised a self-indulgent-looking person that I could not listen to a preacher of religion who looked fat and sensuous, however eloquent he was, any more than I could if I knew he drank intoxicants. After all these years of experience, I still believe as much as ever in the value of 'play' as the fourth of the quartet with work and love and worship, by which men live.

One evening in 1883, going down a dark street in Shadwell on my way from a maternity case, I passed a great tent, something like a circus. A crowd had gathered and I looked in to see what was going on. An aged man was praying on the platform before an immense audience. The length

of the prayer bored me, and I started to leave as he droned on. At that moment a vivacious person near him jumped up and shouted: 'Let us sing a hymn while our brother finishes his prayer.' Unconventionality, common sense, or humour in anything 'religious' was new to me. Brawling or disturbing the order of ritual is criminal in the Established Church. Some one said the interrupter was the speaker of the evening, so I stayed to hear him. I did not know anything about the man, nor did I see him again till fourteen years later. But he left a new idea in my mind, the idea that loyalty to a living Leader was religion, and that knightly service in the humblest life was the expression of it. His illustrations were all from our own immediate environment, much as Christ's were, and the whole thing was so simple and human it touched every one's heart. Religion, as the speaker put it, was chivalry, not an insurance ticket. Life was a field of honour calling for courage to face it, not a tragedy to escape from. Christ's call was to follow Him, not to recognize, much less to comprehend, Him. What Christ asked us for was reasonable service, or the service of our reason — but

real hard service either way. His religion was a challenge, not a sop or dope. The whole talk was of a living Leader of men.

The preacher was an ordinary-looking layman, and I listened all the more keenly because I felt he had no professional axe to grind. Some one, after the meeting ended, gave me a booklet entitled 'How to Read the Bible,' by D. L. Moody, the man to whom we had been listening, and during the next few days, as I got time, I followed the advice in it, and read the familiar legend with new interest and from a new viewpoint. I was searching for some guide to life in it, exactly as I sought in my medical textbooks a guide to physical treatment. I seemed to have suddenly waked up and to be viewing from outside the life which before I just took for granted as it came. The idea of this living Leader, a Sir Lancelot, a Bayard, whose spirit all worth-while people such as Clark-Maxwell, Newton, Gordon, Livingstone, Havelock, Lincoln embodied, who could and did transform all who accepted Him, and who in every rank of life everywhere literally would walk with ordinary folk and enable them 'to play the game' and 'endure as seeing Him who is invisible,'

fascinated me. It tallied also with all my knowledge of history and my personal experiences, but it seemed too big an idea to accept — I seemed halted at a crossroad.

Some time later, I forget how long, some famous athletes known to all the world interested in sports were advertised to speak in East London — cricketers, oarsmen, athletes of national and international fame. I was intensely interested in hearing what they had to say. Seven of them a little later, known on both sides of the Atlantic as the 'Cambridge Seven,' all went to China. That their faith was no more an emotional flash in the pan than John's or Peter's or Paul's is proved by the fact that they are all still there in the field thirty-five years later, though all are men of ample means to live at home in comfort. The speaker whom I actually heard was a great cricketer. For the last forty years he has been the leader in boys' work in London through the Polytechnic Institute; and the last time I saw him, he was disguised in the gorgeous apparel of High Sheriff of London, at a city banquet given to the Prince of Wales. After all these years I can still remember the whole drift of his talk. It was the old call of

Joshua, 'Choose to-day whom you will serve,' self, fear of comrades and others, or Christ.

I felt then, and I still believe to-day, that he was absolutely right. The advance in our ability to understand things, such as the constitution of matter or the realization of the definite limits of our understanding, makes religion more and more a matter of choice. The will to believe is essential. Experience alone will make it knowledge, or, as Christ put it: 'Follow me and you shall have the light of life.' The increasing modesty of science after its marvellous discoveries during the past twenty-five years is permitting us ever more freely to accept this faith. The very conceit of Christ's challenge makes it seem divine. For His 'Follow' meant 'Do as I would do in every relation of life.' No one is certain whether the atom is something or nothing moving around in an orbit. I am not sure I am sitting here, but I am so convinced that treading in the footsteps of the Christ explains the meaning of life, that even when I fail not a shadow of doubt about it softens my sense of regret and self-condemnation.

A truth I learned then and one which the

years have confirmed is that real religion involves real courage. The inefficiency which I had associated with it had not been its fault, but ours. We had not dreamt of taking Christ in earnest. At the close of that address, the speaker urged all present who had made a decision to stand up. There were a number of my friends in the meeting and I felt chained through fear to my seat. Sitting in the front semicircle of seats were almost a hundred husky lads, all dressed alike in sailor suits. They were from a training ship in the harbour. Suddenly one smallish boy got up and stood there, the target of many astounded eyes. I knew well what it would mean to him, when the boys got back aboard, and it nerved me to stand up also. This step I have ever since been thankful for. It is invaluable to know where you stand. The decision fairly to try out in the laboratory of one's own life, that faith which has challenged and stirred the ages, is, I am convinced, the only way ever to obtain a fixed heart on the matter. The prize is to be won, not swallowed, as must be everything else we know of that is of permanent value.

Whatever else was the result of so ap-

parently ephemeral a thing as a decision, it certainly entirely changed the meaning of life to me. I enjoyed everything in it more than ever, and the sneers of my fellows, which I honestly dreaded at first, wore down to a good-humoured chaff when they realized that religion made one do things.

My parents said little or nothing to me, leaving me to work out my own salvation. They could not help noticing my increased interest in evening prayers and my new real interest in the readings of my father, generally from the original Greek of the New Testament and occasionally from the Latin of the Vulgate. For the first time I noticed that he made passages from the King James Version intelligible and interesting.

I confess some of the difficulties were the people who only TALKED about religion. A religious 'sissy' was anathema to me. It was the antithesis of my idea of the Christ. On the contrary, a quotation from that paragon of fearlessness, Paul, was a constant help to me, for the need of a power beyond my own, to win out, was always before me. So much so that forty years later, when my memory is supercharged with details, and when forgetfulness, an inevitable appanage

of one's seventh decade, besets me, I can quote the chapter and even the verse, 2d Timothy, chapter 1, verse 12, without a second's hesitation. It reads: 'I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.'

Intentions must find occupation or wither; emotions must find outlet or burst. Work is the only salvation of what is good in man. Having only limited time to devote to anything apart from work and play, I followed the not unnatural plan of a novice, of dropping around and asking the nearest expert what I could do. In other words, I asked a professional preacher what work for Christ meant for me. I knew him to be an earnest evangelical preacher and so was nonplussed at the barrenness of his ideas. He had nothing to offer but a class in a Sunday school, which was a bigger venture for him than he was aware of, as I had never been inside one, and a much harder one for me than I ever dreamt of. I launched into the work with much zeal, only to meet with little but discouragement. Boys from the streets of Bethnal Green and Whitechapel are not bound by conventions, and why

they first came to the school at all I never yet have been able to decide. It certainly was not any overwhelming desire to acquire what was intended to be learnt there. I made so little progress that I shall never forget my surprise when the superintendent informed me that the following Wednesday night it would be my turn to give a model lesson to my class for the benefit of the other teachers. All week nights were work nights with me, and I had never even heard of a gathering of that kind. However, as it seemed part of the venture, I turned up on time. The boys, to my surprise, came at my request, though they did seem possessed of the spirit of the very devil. I think probably the reason they came was that they knew I was beginning really to care very much for them. We had secretly constructed a small gymnastic outfit in our back yard, where we gave boxing and parallel-bar lessons on Saturday nights. That action had afforded me the pleasure of getting in some of my athletic colleagues to help in the only way they could or would. This was one activity which they had already begun to approve of amidst what they considered my new craze. The lesson for teachers was a failure — I

punished publicly, in the way I was punished at school, an offending scholar who sucked peppermints, which I considered rude. The method is still at issue in my mind. Even Christ did not come to do away with laws, and Solomon, who commended the stick, was a wise man. I appealed to the parson himself, and invited him to visit my Saturday evening class and decide from actual experience whether self-control, good sportsmanship, and better manhood were not being taught there, besides a growing respect being inculcated in my little ruffians for their teacher. Alas, he utterly refused to inquire personally. He had never even seen boxing and could not understand how the game teaches a boy to come up smiling even when in difficulty. He would not admit that it was any training for Christian warfare. His decision was that boxing was 'a soul-damning sin,' which he conveyed to me in writing so as to avoid mistakes, and I was politely asked to transfer my activities elsewhere than his Sunday school.

With some college chums I had just hired a house, a communal affair, and we had taken in a truly democratic household. One was a beloved English athletic fellow stu-

dent, another a young Antiguan negro who had become a very famous debater for the Christian Evidence Society in the parks and public forums of the East End of London, a man bubbling over with humour, whose laugh would drive the melancholy out of a professional funeral mourner. He was a most fearless and lovable personality, and was eager to get a chance to study medicine. The skin-colour-scheme of the human being never worries the English. The third was also 'deficient' in this respect. He was a man from Madras, a gentle, retiring creature who had been helped over to England to get education and had somehow become stranded, and needed help to enable him to finish his medical training. Him, too, we all sincerely loved, though he seemed to us at the absolute opposite end of the pole from us in most of his reactions. In our household he was a suppressed mystic. He took to the cold bath, however, according to our morning rule like a good sportsman, though I think he hated it. The last member was a clever medical colleague, a strong Kingsleyite and good athlete, now in Australia.

My love and respect for men of the sea has been instinctive and hereditary. My

forbears have been fighting men through the centuries, men from Cornwall and Devon, and have followed the old Admirals — from Drake and Howard and Raleigh to Rodney, Boscawen, and Nelson — and to-day close relations not a few follow the honourable profession of the Navy. I can understand why Christ chose so many men who went 'down to the sea in ships' as the safest repositories for His truth — honest, brave, self-reliant, resourceful men, even if a bit behind in their education. Moreover, He apparently could not get any one else except one doctor and one business man.

Our hospital patients came from the great London docks and Billingsgate fish-market, and many a good sea story from many a grand old shellback came our way during that, their 'final docking' before they 'crossed the last bar' from the wards of our 'Alma Mater.' Their sorrows and troubles, their difficulties and temptations, their robbery at the hands of land-sharks and rumsellers, did not fail to interest us and create a real sympathy for them. So together with a young Australian from Melbourne, a fellow student, I began some open-air Sunday song services amongst their

haunts in the famous thoroughfare known as Radcliffe Highway. We visited in half a dozen of the miserable underground joss-houses where often the sexes mixed promiscuously, laws and police notwithstanding.

CHAPTER III

In 1889 my chief suggested that I would enjoy a trip to the Deep Sea Fisheries. He was interested in a new movement to aid the men whom he always loved, for, besides being a very great surgeon, he was also a master mariner and a fine sailor. 'Don't go in summer,' he said. 'There is nothing to see then. Go in the middle of winter and you will have plenty of excitement and learn to sympathize with the lives of the men on the North Sea banks.'

As I look back I see the reason for this advice. The very physical danger and the splendid courage of the men fascinated me, and a real love was engendered for these red-blooded seamen. This led me to study the problems of their lives exactly as if they were my own. One saw the disadvantages under which they laboured, just because they were inarticulate, and the intolerable vampires who, to rob them and their families of their hard-won earnings, spread the devil's net in the form of open saloons and houses of ill fame innumerable around

the quays at which they had to land. Many were even paid off in offices which were annexes to saloons. Out of these it was practically impossible to escape without drinking and the danger of being drugged. Even at sea, vessels known as 'hells' were sent out to get their money at any price. Homes were ruined, widows created, and the numbers of helpless ones left behind had no alternatives but the poorhouses and orphan asylums. A challenge which seemed big enough to demand attention rang in my ears. I made a second voyage and my chief came with me. Still later, in London, he put the problem, 'What are you going to do in life? Practise in London or work among fishermen?' To me there seemed only one answer possible, for I felt that London would not miss any surgery that I could give it. The missionary effort among the fishermen was in debt, and the first thing I was asked to do was called 'deputation work.' I knew nothing whatever about it, and dreaded nothing more than being obliged to go around and ask strangers to give money, even though it was not for myself. Nor was this only because I had never spoken in public, or in debating societies,

and had stage fright, but because the methods which I had seen used in such meetings had had too much flavour of conventional piety. The meetings were usually held in a drawing-room in the middle of the afternoon, when one could only expect an audience of ladies, and usually ended with tea and cakes. The vicar usually presided. Health resorts were the most popular sites, and athletes and young men seldom or never patronized them. Sometimes they were held on the lawns in summer. Those were better and always more representative. I liked them better, also, though I always felt that they were sentimental rather than business affairs, and that a great deal of time was wasted, and not infrequently as much was spent on tea and expenses as accrued to the 'mission' funds. I remember once in my nervousness snapping the lid of a silver box full of matches in my tail-coat pocket, and thereby igniting the contents in the middle of my speech. By crushing it in my hand, and at the expense of a trifling burn, I escaped detection. I always resented black tail coats as an appanage of religion anyhow. But raising money was part of the challenge and had therefore, I

thought, to be endured. Travels that have led me all around the world have convinced me that inefficient propaganda is still the weakest part of 'missionary' enterprise. If we really want to understand the problems of a country, the men of unselfish motives and enough self-sacrifice to go into missionary work, who live their whole lives among the people of a country, and speak their language, should be the ones to give us the best information, and so inspire our hearts to help by showing us the real challenge and what Christianity has to offer in their field, and is accomplishing. If missionaries are not men of sufficient mental calibre to do that, are they the men whom to-day we should wish to represent any one else's business except the Lord's? The fact is that some travelogue man, like Mr. Burton Holmes, who takes in all the world, secures far larger and more influential audiences, and so do the so-called explorers and even politicians, who haven't anything like the same opportunities to give correct information about the countries of the world. To take refuge in saying that we should trust the Lord to do the least attractive end of the work is too often a form of selfishness

or idleness. We do not work at the problem enough and put enough of our energy and money into illustrating it to make it intelligently interesting to the average audience, who, so far as my experience goes, are keenly interested in their response when one has real information of a convincing nature to impart. Mr. Ford says, 'Have any useful good thing to sell and people will want to buy it.' We all realize the value of visualizing advertisements in every other kind of business, as witness the Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis, Civitans, Lions, Shriners, Women's City Clubs, Twentieth Century Clubs, and endless others that are looking for outlets for their real religion of loving their neighbour in deeds.

The second duty which I was asked to perform was entirely to my liking. I joined a small sixty-ton ketch-rigged fishing-craft at Great Yarmouth, and as a first missionary effort I sailed to Ostend to pick up four tons of tobacco with which to fight the floating grog traffic. We were frozen into the harbour and the tobacco filled our little ship from ballast deck to main beams. There was an attractive unconventionality about a religion that fought evil with its own

weapons. The rumsellers used cheap tobacco to lure men to their destruction on the 'hells.' We sold it cheaper, even at a loss, to lure them away. In three months we had nineteen vessels, in as many fleets, each flying a yard of blue bunting a fathom or two above their bowsprit ends on the fore-topmast stay. All these vessels sold without payment of duty cheaper tobacco of varieties selected by a plebiscite of the men. These flags stood for ships clean of intoxicating liquors and immorality. A man does not beat his wife, wreck his home, fight his neighbours, or part with his reason and his money because he has been smoking tobacco.

If the hardest thing in the world to resist is temptation, we should present a vision of Christ that tempts men the right way. Real religion dreams dreams, and sees visions that intoxicate, every bit as much as the licence permitted by the will not to believe. Only it intoxicates with deeds of kindness, justice, chivalry, love. It answers the insatiate demands of youth and high spirit for freedom from boredom and the pettiness of daily routine, every whit as naturally and undeniably as do dram-drinking, petting-

parties, gaming-tables, or the self-pollutions of lust and licence which surely, if slowly, evoke the loathsome Hyde out of the knightly Jekyll which is in us, and, judged by end results, leave their devotees in hell here, whatever may await us beyond this 'bourne of Time and Place.' Paul's life was as full of thrills as Herod Agrippa's; Livingstone's and Lincoln's as Jay Gould's or King Charles the Second's. The idea of expecting a halo for so-called self-mortification is bunkum. No workingman wants any such rubbish. Personally, I loathe the idea; the man who goes around with any such notion in his head is a misfit and should get out.

Christ means to me the best kind of a Friend, as well as Leader, who is giving me in this world ten times, nay, the proverbial hundred fold, as good times as I could enjoy in any other way. Christ's religion to me is primarily for this world, and the New Jerusalem is to come down from Heaven onto this earth and we are to be the Washingtons and Nelsons. We are to save that city — and we are to have all the fun of really creating it. If Crœsus and Midas, Bacchus and the Satyrs, have the fun of life

here, then the philosophy of the East is right, and life is hell and Nirvana and nothingness is heaven. If Christ is right and life is a field of honour, and Sir Galahad and Nathan Hale and Edith Cavell got the real fun out of it, then to every red-blooded man life becomes heaven in proportion as he seizes its opportunities for service.

As I write, we are cleaning up land and developing a village. It will not be half the fun when it is all finished. The joy of a temporary world is in doing worth-while things. When warfare meant only physical danger, and called for only physical courage, this vision led men with one heart into the trenches, and that with no thought but *fidelitas usque ad mortem.* Nor had they any grouch so long as they were convinced that they had done their part. Pounds sterling, or love? Which is the real force? What sane man would lay down his life for money? The constraining power of love, thank God, makes any real man see that there are things dearer than life. The Christian wins out by seeing the unseen. He endures as seeing Him who is invisible.

CHAPTER IV

In the autumn of 1891 a friend suggested my visiting the fisheries on the Newfoundland Banks, so in 1892 I sailed in the ninety-nine-ton ketch Albert to the Newfoundland and Labrador coasts. The conceit of the suggestion, the expense of it, and the question of qualifications for the undertaking worried me not a little. As a mere physical adventure the opportunity seemed almost too good to be true. I consulted my beloved mother as to what she would do. Her answer assures me that now, though so-called 'dead,' she still speaketh. 'I would use daily,' she replied, 'the words of the 143d Psalm, "Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee."' Could any theology be more profound? Any sociology more practical? To do my surgery as Christ would do it! — my navigation, my investigations, my study of the new problems which would confront me! I am sure that when Christ made doors and windows in Nazareth they did not jam and misfit.

I have been discouraged sometimes in the Labrador work by men who would say,

'Why spend money for X-rays, radium, and up-to-date hospitals for a few fishermen?' Yet these same men never queried, 'Why hang the price of a full-fledged hospital in pearls around my wife's neck as earlier barbarians did?' Why? Because that is one of the first things that Christ means to me. He does not do work cheaply because He is dealing with simple men whose bread depends on physical health, nor let things slide because human experts are not there to criticize. Would any decent man? There is no question as to what Christ would do. Wouldn't He work to secure the right clay if He needed any for the cure of a workingman's eyes? I've spent many dollars on pilgrimages to famous clinics, and many on instruments and new books, with the idea that Christ would at least have me a modernist in the practice of surgery.

What a home-coming that was in December, 1892! What a splendid trans-Atlantic trip we had made, when the ice of approaching winter drove us out of the Labrador harbours, offering us six or eight months in Jack Frost's bonds, without supplies, as the only alternative. We averaged seven and a bit knots per hour from harbour mouth to

pier head in England, all the while dreaming dreams of answering as soon as spring came the most alluring challenge I had ever pictured in all my visions of opportunity. Hero? Bunkum!! That pedestal will not stand the test of experience. One thing the people had to have was nurses — skilful, trained, gentle nurses, the best exponents of love when it is most needed and most vital. The first two of my old nurses who were asked to volunteer responded at once. Good positions, assuring an income and a future, were already theirs. But the love of God, like contentment, never fails to turn the wooden cup to gold and the homely whistle to a strain of sweet music. The splendid description of love in even the first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 13, fails to envisage its infinite power.

Two years ago, our little hospital steamer, after twenty-five years' service on our somewhat inclement coast, sank incontinently at sea almost without warning. I found just such a one as I wanted — small, seaworthy, well-found, rating 100 A–1 at Lloyds', and with boilers which would keep steam so economically on wood that I can run her a mile on a twelve-foot stick, once

we have got steam up. Her owner was compelled to sell her. She was within our means, and I bought her lying on the hard at Southampton. No steamer so small, so far as I can learn, had ever crossed the North Atlantic. She is only sixteen feet in the beam, having about thirty inches of freeboard, and a coal-bunker capacity of only eighteen tons — about an hour's burning for a modern trans-Atlantic liner! 'You haven't money enough to pay any one to take her across,' commented more than one wiseacre friend, after the news of her purchase leaked out. But I was not worrying. I was appealing to a higher force. Skilled friends as soon as the chance was offered them brought her out 'for nothing, just to do their share.' If that skipper volunteer and that engineer volunteer did not share my creed, ought I to have refused their help, which was *real* help? Could that offer, made in His spirit, to do as He would do, be irreligious? And would a decision to refuse their help because 'I knew it all,' and as a result have the boat stranded on the other side and our people left without its aid, be religious orthodoxy? It certainly would not be Christian. Every day we cruised in her last season on the

Labrador coast. I thanked God for that spirit of His which works in this world 'without observation' and without labels, 'that moveth where it listeth.'

This is not an effort to tell a story, but to try to analyze one as better evidence than any mere statement of what Christ has meant to one human being. Already enough has been said of self. Ninety-nine hundredths of the Labrador work has not been mine at all. To say that it is a movement in which I have been allowed to share is more accurate. At times I have wished I had more money. As the years went by, the sense of the resulting slowness and waste of time impressed me increasingly. I realized how slowly new ideas come to one's mind. Often I have wished that one could have taken a course at some university on 'How to love your neighbour.' Surgery, because it was one's own particular line of work, a remedial effort which after all only left patchwork, was almost necessarily overemphasized. The need for prophylactic work, child-welfare work, industrial, educational, mechanical engineering, cash stores, means for thrift, the value of artistic influences, the stress on efficient propaganda,

the dignity of collecting money, have in turn all risen up and shouted at me. Christ has become to me to mean, more and more, DOING something, anything, well.

The medical mission really has nothing over that of the engineer. Clewes of India was as efficient as Gilmour of Mongolia, or Paton of the Hebrides, or as Livingstone in Africa. Tyndale Biscoe, with his hunting-crop in Kashmir, has built character as surely as ever did Stewart in Lovedale, Higginbottom and his famous agricultural farms in India, Jackson and his reindeer herds in Alaska, as much as Hudson Taylor and his men in China, or General Booth and his drums the world around. There is no such thing as size, to weep over. Size after all depends, as Einstein shows, on velocity; and so we can see how the spiritual is real, the real is spiritual, and the widow's mite bigger than all the gold and silver of the Pharisees. Mrs. Wiggs at home in the cabbage patch is as true a hero as Sir Lancelot with his spear on his quest for forlorn damsels. God's challenge to us is only to do whatever we can. Christ's religion is as natural as the flowers in spring, and relates to the everyday things around us.

I can remember being blamed because my critics claimed that starting a lumber mill, in order to give labour to hungry families, was not a rightful use for 'mission' funds. Not a few criticized us severely for so problematical a venture as introducing reindeer into Labrador. When we accepted the gift of a site for a hospital on Caribou Island, Labrador, the deed stipulated that I must not sell pork or molasses, or enter into trade there. At that time it seemed an insult to an English surgeon that he had to sign his name that he would not go into the grocery business. But the time came when it was apparent that that was exactly what Christ would do in that situation. Most of the necessities of life had to be imported in Labrador. The people lived on a truck or peonage system, and were paid in kind and not in cash. They did not know the value of the fish they caught or the price of the things which they were buying. I remember being bitterly assailed for sending the 'Trade Review,' telling the prices of our produce and our necessities, into different sections of the coast. I was openly pilloried because I collected a series of 'accounts' spread over a period of years, and analyzed

them in order to assure myself of the ability of the country to support its people. Indeed, I once became so discouraged with the poverty, and the recurring diseases of both children and adults, diseases which resulted from malnutrition and chronic underfeeding and lack of proper clothing, that I journeyed to British Columbia and made an agreement with the Prime Minister to send over two hundred families to sites selected on that seaboard, he to advance the passage money and see that they got a fair start. This, however, the Newfoundland Government of the day refused to permit. When at length we actually preached co-operation, and started a cash coöperative store, we at once became anathema; and when later we started such a venture four miles from a trader's station, he, an ex-politician, set wheels in motion, not only in the press, but in political circles, and a commission was sent down purporting to inquire into our activities, but really with a view to disclosing our economic turpitude.

Personally, I never felt that the Sermon on the Mount, or the healing of the blind and lepers, brought Christ to the Cross. It followed so closely after His actual in-

terference with the money-changers that I have no doubt but that the devil of greed for gain, which still ruins so many of our men in power, had most to do with His enemies coming out into the open. That devil is not dead yet, not by a long way!

We have now many new efforts seriously begun, and are trying to tackle our problems more in the light of modern sociological teachings. We admit our crudity, and we fully endorse its wisdom, and, indeed, most generous volunteer experts are enabling us to give somewhat efficiently those interpretations of Christ in action. A lesson, much needed, and one which true love calls for, is always to be optimistic. Never again will I be pessimistic because I cannot see the Christ bringing in His Kingdom in my way. If my boy promises me that he will not smoke, and I find a used pipe in his coat pocket, I do not say anything, I just trust him.

Now, whenever we have a real challenge to a real problem, we have learnt to believe that the harder it looks, and the less material return there seems in it, the more surely and easily shall we find some one to respond to its challenge. The fact is, hu-

manity naturally responds to S.O.S. calls when it hears them. There is something else in man besides original sin. Experience has demonstrated this unanswerably.

The storm tosses even the best of ships and sometimes just hurls her on the rocks, or, striking some snag, she becomes partially disabled, and, if unaided, is driven ashore in spite of her best efforts, though she may have been once classed '100 A–1' at Lloyds'. During the years, more than one human craft, damaged in the treacherous currents of modern social life, has come North to seek help in our less artificial surroundings, and they have found it, and gone back, and are living new lives to-day. But each time, so it has seemed to us, it has not been the escape from the temptation, but the obvious challenge to get up and help others, the chivalry of the Christ service, calling even to heavily handicapped and almost lost talents to do worth-while deeds. Deep calls to deep. Never yet have I seen the fear of punishment help a prodigal to a new sonship.

There may be sections of the world where the method of presenting the Gospel of Christ to men, which prevailed a couple of

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centuries ago when actual information was necessary, will function to some extent today. But in the new light of our modern world it seems too cheap a price at which to purchase so great an end. If Christianity cannot be presented to the world, if its preachers are not leaders in deeds as well as in words, if our presentation of Christianity has nothing beyond its philosophy to offer to life and fails to 'deliver the goods' which developing reason and enriched faith in God teach mankind, then mankind has a right to demand some new religion which can adapt itself to our ever-advancing world. I can never believe but that in every man is born a spirit that is real, as well as a potential sonship of God, though defects in the human mechanism through which it has to relate itself may pervert its efforts and prevent its demonstrating itself. These defects may be hereditary, or 'original,' and are often a visiting of the sins of the fathers on the children in the most terrible of all possible ways. As I see the Christ, He teaches that the task of making life worth living is not a loafer's job. The slacker is not only miserable hereafter, but harmful and foolish here and now.

Life is like Labrador, a Labourer's Land. It is intended to produce that which no loafer's land ever anywhere can ever produce, the character of sons of God. Can any one desire a world better suited for that task? Christ teaches us that life offers a worthwhile prize to us all, but, like all other valuable prizes, it has to be won always with some temporary self-sacrifice. Love, Joy, and Hope and Peace are the slow-growing fruits of the spirit. Love spells sacrifice. True joy spells achievement. Hope thrives best in hard times. Peace is a result of victory first over self. The most meticulous emphasis on the letter of Law or Gospel is more likely to kill than to make alive. The way of the spirit, exactly as of the flesh, in a world like ours, spells labour — hard labour whatever the end we seek.

The Western world which listened to, and heard, if ever so indistinctly, Christ's message, has led in its emphasis on the dignity of labour, though Europe is still somewhat handicapped by certain social customs and human relationships which are relics of barbaric days. The newer world, in partially freeing itself from many of the old incubuses, was trying to give expression to what Christ

really meant — brotherhood under God as contrasted with the snobbery and pride of hereditary rank and its dangerous anachronisms. That mere possession of things still bulks so large in the new world's psychology is her greatest danger to-day. Perhaps Christ's truest message was the emphasis He put on labour. He was a labourer and most of His disciples were also. To be repositories for the truth for which He came to die, He chose mostly not the rich, but the labouring men. I have personally found more inspiration in the cottages of fishermen than in many palaces of the rich. Many of my most helpful and richest hours have been in the company of these children small in the world's eye. Paul felt the same. He saw the value of labouring as a tent-maker.

Christ means to me that this world has the potential in it of a Kingdom of God. We are finding this through workingmen, not mere talkers, men too humble as a rule to set themselves up as oracles. I take off my hat to every man of science always, if he is a man who works: Newtons, Clark-Maxwells, Stephensons, Darwins, Huxleys, Faradays, Humphreys, the Wrights and Bells, Marconis, and Edisons, who by work teach

us of the marvels of the world; and so help me to realize that it is the work of God. What we know of this world with our finite brains, this side 'the Divide,' convinces me that neither man nor chance created it. My faith, at any rate, does not have to strain itself to the breaking point to accept that premise as a sound, working hypothesis. I take my hat off naturally also to men of physical accomplishment, the Spartans, the Olympic victors, the great athletes of all time, for their ability to do things. To revere that prowess is more natural than to revere a dollar, a dinner, a diamond, or a drink.

It is mostly in the West that this reverence for physical accomplishment has flourished. Alexander and his Greeks failed to convey it to the Indians or to the East generally. It may be a side-light, but it seems to me a direct reflection of what Christ's messages really mean. 'I am come that ye might have life and might have it more abundantly.' He never meant to me the Christ pictured in the art of the Middle Ages — the convent, the monastery, the hermit, the recluse, the body hampered here with religious clothing and furniture or hereafter with harps and halos. He means

that we are the sons and heirs of the Maker of this marvellous cosmos and are the channels upon it of His Kingdom to be. I want to believe, anyhow, and the wish itself seems some presumptive evidence that there exists in me something beyond the 'mere material' — that is, if the material does exist. The objective is big enough and the conceit lofty enough to suggest an answer to what is the meaning of life, and to redeem it from being the hopeless self-determined tragedy which some are willing to accept and to lie down under.

The very idea that we can make life worth while suggests an answer as to the meaning of life. For through the third great department of life, the world with all its doubts, with all its scepticism, so often only the retribution for its failures, is increasingly trying to keep those passions under, the conquest of which is half man's glory. It proclaims increasingly as real victors the men who have triumphed in the spiritual strife, and won out against the sloth that damns and the assaults that kill. The fame and honour of a Lincoln, even as against a Washington, grow from day to day. The spirit, portrayed in the 'Perfect Tribute' of

the speech at Gettysburg, wins instant admiration from ever-increasing hosts of mankind.

So, as we think of men who were great — great with the greatness that explains the real challenge and opportunities of life — there rise to our minds, not Midas and Crœsus, creators of money bags; not Cæsars and Alexanders and Napoleons, creators of temporary kingdoms; but the men who have had a part, in however restricted a walk in life, in contributing to the Kingdom of God on earth, the men and women who embodied most nearly the spirit of Jesus Christ. That spirit made over the Johns and Peters and Pauls, the Cromwells and Lincolns and Jeromes, the Saint Francises, the Savonarolas, the Luthers, the Cranmers, the Kingsleys, the Wesleys, the Livingstones, the Careys, and the Martyns, and later the Booths, the Taylors, the Gandhis, the Sadhu Sundar Singhs, and all those who have followed the Christ. Following Christ is a hard task. It is a warfare. But He teaches me increasingly that life is worth while if and only as we make its goal 'well done' and not 'well comprehended.'

CHAPTER V

It never worried me whether I believed infallible Pope, infallible Fundamentalist, or infallible teacher of science that is current. Christ ever meant to me a peerless Leader, whose challenge was not to save ourselves, but to lose ourselves; not to understand Him, but to have courage to follow Him. The religion of Christ is the simplest and most human course of life as well as the most divine. Life is not the horrible tragedy of being bound to a wheel from which escape into a Nirvana of forgetfulness is the loftiest hope. Life is a victory to be won by the will even against a timid intellect. Life is always everywhere a real, tough, courageous fight, with daily opportunities to which are added all the fun of achievement and all the glories of the conqueror. The edges of my own intellectual conceit often get jarred. But the lure of the real meaning of life and the absolute confidence that my faith is not mere credulity has been a constant help. The service demanded of us is a reasonable service, the service of our reason grown courageous. Common sense is divine sense

after all — our youthful attitude to religious conventions was not so far wrong. I realize it was because we had wrongly thought of religion as banished from practical affairs that we had dreaded nothing more than being considered 'Young Christians' by our fellows.

To imagine that Christ would not wear flannels and play football, or a dress suit and attend dinners and functions, or accept the innocent changing conventions of the day, is as irrational to me as to suppose that we ought all to wear Quaker dress or a Sadhu's petticoats, or that Eskimo women should affect long skirts. In fact, it goes further than that. The Christ I visualize is inconspicuous for all absolutely unnecessary differences. He would wear no jewelry of fabulous value any more around His neck than in His nose. No ostentatious show of any kind was His. He hated titles, separating man from man. Leadership in everything that was of value for body, soul, and spirit was His. He was the last on earth to be anything snobbish. He was the Captain of the team, the Solon of scholars, the most modest and unobtrusive in social life. He loved play and work as well as wor-

ship. I could not love a Christ, as divine, who did not. So for me the interpretation of Christ has had to aim at all that. The conventional pictures of Christ were and are abhorrent to me. All ideas of hair shirts and unnecessary ascetic habits in connection with Him are repulsive, since they are unnatural. An incompetent 'other worldly' Christ has no attraction whatever for me.

Viewpoints that many better men than I still affect for me are impossible and radically incompatible. Thank God I realized in time that some men see red as green, and others green as red. Some men live for grand opera. I only go to sleep in it. Some men love things because they are rusty and musty and old, and see nothing beautiful in a thing simply because it is useful. I have seen some patients to whom a drug meant life, and had to be devoured daily, while to another the same drug in the same dose spelt death. Some traits in our characters are, I firmly believe, due to hereditary faults in our interpreting machine. There is truth in the deduction of the Chicago jurist that much wrongdoing is the result of physical deficiencies. The head of a great college in India, whom I know, cannot tell

the difference between red and green. Yet he is a most valuable worker. This knowledge has saved me many an ill-timed, unkind, and entirely wrongful judgment of others. It is the answer to 'Why so many denominations?' and 'Why any bitterness between them?'

Even before I entered the work among fishermen, I decided that, for my part, I would never ask a man whether he believed exactly as I did before I could agree to work whole-heartedly with him. If we wait until our thinking machines are all in complete accordance before we coöperate, we shall never work together in that universal brotherhood which must precede the coming of the Kingdom of God on earth. The emphasis on intellectual interpretation divides us — the willingness to work together draws men together. And it is wonderful how hard it is, looking at the manner in which men of diverse faiths have met their problems and interpreted divine love in their deeds of every day, to judge as to the way in which they say their prayers or get their inspiration and strength, or what particular labels they should bear in the religious world.

Illustrations by the score leap to mind as this thought comes to me. To refuse the help of a surgeon, a nurse, a teacher, or an engineer, in a position where no interpretation of love is more needed than that which they can render, and as an alternative to allow one's fellow creatures to suffer for lack of what they offer, just because I believe differently from them, would be to my mind, not only criminal, but the very reverse of what Christ did. When did He, who sent out Thomas and Judas to preach the Gospel, ever impose any such test? He might have done so. For He had a wisdom that no man has ever been able to question. But He did not, so why should I? Surely the call to go out and help the Lord against the mighty is the call most likely to find response in human hearts. Only the dead feel no answering emotion when helplessness appeals to them for what they can give. Who would not want to rush for the child about to be run over in traffic, or to save the victims from a burning building, even if it were only a suffering cow or chicken? There is something that responds as naturally as an automatic reflex to high ideals and can only be called love, though it is

undeniable that one can in time so destroy and impede the physical channels of impulse and response that some degenerates even seem to be incapable of anything divine. We know that faulty machines do cause us both to act and speak wrongly, and that damage done by chronic indulgence not only makes restraint necessary in the case of chronic criminals and drug addicts and lunatics, but also causes mechanical defects to be transmitted to children; which is the same as saying that these exceptions need help and power from outside themselves. Christ's unparalleled confidence in Judas, it always seemed to me, was what broke at last the traitor's heart, even if too late, but broke it all the same.

Christ to me is the justification and inspiration to keep my body and mind fit and perfect, that thereby I may preserve myself, my soul, fit to accomplish, able to serve, and confident that I shall hear over there, not 'You are loosed from the wheel of life, you can now enjoy forgetfulness,' but 'Well done; here are more talents for you, and more victories to win. Enter into that kind of joy which is the joy of your Lord.'

Christ means to me a living personality

to-day who moves about in this world, and who gives us strength and power as we endure by seeing Him who is invisible only to our fallible and finite human eyes; just as any other good comrade helps one to be brave and to do the right thing. Faith was essential for that conviction fifty years ago. To-day, with telephones and radios and X-ray, and our knowledge of matter as only energy, and now with television within our grasp, there is not the slightest difficulty in seeing how reasonable that faith is. 'The body of His glorification' passed through closed doors, so the Apostles said — well, why should I be able to see it any more than I can see an ultra-violet or an ultra-red ray, a molecule, an atom, an electron, or a proton? All that those old fellows claimed was that 'now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.'

Christ called for faith in Himself. He never called for intellectual comprehension. He sent out to preach His gospel men who had not any creed or any intellectual faith, only a dumb sort of faith that Christ was more than man. I believe that He sends me out also to help make a better world. Surely that is not an irrational conceit or senti-

mental twaddle. Christ says that we must begin with faith, but that we can prove the truth of that faith ourselves.

It is not extraordinary that we must begin with faith. It is natural because we have to begin everything else with faith. Faith is an inherent quality of finiteness. It cannot be forgone. We cannot live without it. We cannot make any progress without it. No faith, no business; no faith, no fun; no faith, no victory. But we can make Christ's faith knowledge in the same way that we can make it in any other realm; that is, by testing it in the laboratory. All new treatments of men's bodily ills I have been testing in that way all my life. I get treatments from any one and everywhere and try them out. That is all that my Christ expects. 'Follow me' (can any one say more?) 'and you shall have the light of life.'

CHAPTER VI

BREADTH is a quality of God's mercy, not a hall-mark of man's iniquity; it is not one of the insignia of inefficiency, but the one essential quality of that wisdom which can lead to final achievement. It has always been to me one of the great claims of Christ Himself to be something more than an ordinary man, that in His tiny, circumscribed stage on earth, with His intense idealism, devoted purpose, and matchless courage, He could be the broadest in His judgments of any religious leader the world has ever known.

A journey through the old civilization of Egypt, up into the Sudan, impressed upon us how men, exactly like ourselves, for thousands of years have been passing across the same stage as we, in endless, unceasing numbers, generation after generation, race after race, century after century. Everywhere one sees, in the most indestructible materials they knew of, the evidences that their greatest desire was to secure permanence for themselves at any cost, in every

possible way of which they could conceive. Moreover, they have so far rendered permanent their bodies on earth that we look into their very faces, six thousand years after they have passed on, and picture as clearly what they did and said and thought as if we verily were mixing again among the living actors on their own stage of life. As we gaze into the face of the old King Amenhotep IV lying in his tomb just as he was put there thousands of years ago, and at the bodies of his servants killed at the same time that their souls might go with him for service in the next world, we realize how that desire is universal and natural and is our best hope that it will be satisfied.

It is the same all around the globe, wherever man crawls upon its surface. We passed through another great cradle of mankind, the valleys of the Tigris and the Euphrates. Here again all around us were written the same lessons as on the Nile. At Ur of the Chaldees, the home of Abraham, at Kish, oldest of known great cities, at Babylon, famous for the wonderful men who ruled the world of their day, at a hundred ancient haunts of mankind is inscribed the same verdict. So strong was his desire

for permanent life that man, coming into these then fertile plains from the high mountains, was not satisfied to express his devotion by mere temples rising from the ground, though these were buildings that took years to erect as did our own great cathedrals. But God was so unattainable that He must obviously be worshipped from that which was really high, and not a temple merely called so. So these started by first building a mountain on the plain. The ziggurats, or artificial hills, which they raised to place their temples upon, took so long to erect that the workers who commenced the task could seldom have expected to see its completion. Their zeal, their devotion, their sacrifice were boundless.

Yet all these greatest conceptions of man are alike brought to nought by that dimension of our universe which we are just beginning to recognize as an integral part of all our science — the fourth dimension of time. So we know it will be with all our 'things,' all our 'permanent' buildings, all our provisions for getting, keeping, holding — all will be as futile as those of Seti or Rameses, or Urgengur or Nebuchadnezzar; exactly as was the case with our infinitely

more ancient fellow men who left flint knives which we picked up after they had been buried deep beneath the very foundations of Kish itself, or of the other men who left their arrowheads in the sands on top of the ancient Egyptian highlands probably before the Nile ever existed — to say nothing of their ancestors who crawled the earth in a yet earlier day, and of whom all traces are lost far back in the æons of geologic time.

It is obvious that man is himself a traveller; that the purpose of this world is not 'to have and to hold,' but to 'give and to serve.' There can be no other meaning. The lesson of the time element of our cosmogony, of the temporary duration of things, far from discouraging us from effort should spur us to truer and nobler and more earnest work, because not in the thing but in our activity lies the road to our real completion and permanence. We are spiritual beings, not material ones, and the meaning of life is its spiritual value, and our unselfishness is the pledge of the better day that awaits us. Even the exact, emotionless sciences of mathematics, chemistry, and physics are to-day suggesting that the atom

itself has no material substance whatever. But there are two things that no true and wise man will deny; namely, that love is the greatest thing in the world, and that 'he loveth best who serveth best.' What greater thing can Christ mean to any generation of the world than these truths? Was not the whole lesson of His life that here not even He, as expressed through His physical body, had 'any abiding city'? Life is obviously a school, not a bargain counter. Yet so real a counter is it that the pride and pleasure of winning out in the transaction is entrusted to us ourselves to win or lose. So great are the possibilities of it that so far it has been a sheer impossibility for it to have entered into the heart of man to conceive what awaits those who love God 'in the spirit that Christ revealed to us as possible.' Doubt this of course we shall, but it is scientifically true that it is as far beyond our brain conception as the thoughts suggested by the new knowledge of matter, each atom of which is now known to be a universe with planets called electrons flying in their orbits round a central proton. Thus hydrogen has one planet, but gold no less than seventy-nine in every atom, suggest-

ing that our sun and all its planets including our earth may be but an atom of some infinitely great substance in a universe, the size of which no human mind could ever conceive.

Yet these things are not to discourage, but to reassure, us; not to drive us to despair and make us content to hand over our divine spark of reason either to unthinking superstition or to shallow claimants to infallible intelligence; but to inspire our faith with that basis of reason which it has a right to demand and certainly longs for; namely, that there are bigger things than our little brain can even imagine, and that comprehension is no limit to legitimate acceptance of axioms. Prayer is not to inform God of what He does not know; it is an eye through which we see God. Faith is not a denial of reason; it is a corollary of finality in relation with the infinite.

Travelling in the Holy Land itself teaches, as perhaps nothing else on earth could teach, that fatal propensity of mankind to fix the heart and mind, not on realities, but on the shadows called 'things'; and so ever to meet disappointment in life, as one finds at the hands of the greatest of

all teachers — experience — what phantoms are all that he thought real. In the innumerable piles of tinsel heaped everywhere in profusion on what are called 'sacred sites,' it seems as though the enemy of mankind had determined by mere momentum of atomic weight to keep down the Spirit that once came to earth in the Master of men, and to hide forever beneath 'things' the real vision of men as spiritual beings and sons of God.

On Christmas Eve at Bethlehem, somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Nativity of Christ, 'under the wide and starry sky' we gathered, a motley crowd, like that which assembles on Christmas Eve in England or on Beacon Hill in Boston on the same occasion, to rejoice in the vision then given to man of his great destiny. It was rather cold, and the flickering candles made it difficult to read the words of the time-honoured old carols. It was a real delight to have things put in their place for once; for somehow there was impressed on every one's heart the inherent simplicity of the truth, and the real miracle of 'the way' in which that truth had been taught to men. Here we were standing on the spot which

more than any other on all the round globe for twenty centuries has influenced the progress of the world towards what mankind at its best is striving for. Here the true nature of love was revealed through the physical life of a village carpenter, a life that ended on a felon's cross. Yet here, under such circumstances, had the world been taught that man's life on earth is not a hopeless tragedy, but that physical life here can be for us all just an abiding field of honour; that reality is not in the armour, the sword, or the plumes, but in the Spirit; and that without the incoming and indwelling of that Spirit no intellectual infallibility, no meticulous ritual, no self-deprivation of talents which are given to man to spell for him capacity and responsibility, nothing mental, nothing physical, can proclaim what Christ means to any one life or to mankind.

As we there faced the question of what Christ intended He should mean to each of us, what in our heart of hearts could we be conscious of as the true answer, fear though we might to confess it, and dread though we might to face it? What does He mean? It can be no demand that we understand Him; still less that we should consent to recog-

nize Him. Can it be less than a challenge to follow Him?

Men of every age, of every clime, of every race, have longed for a solution of life's riddle. What is the meaning of life on earth? The answer that rings out to the ages from the life of Jesus Christ is not a dope or a maudlin soporific. It is a challenge as clear as the sun at midday: 'Follow me.'

No man has ever done despite to his reason or his faith by his willingness to take up that challenge. The school of experience is the one in which men themselves, especially men who accomplish things, place most confidence. In surgery and medicine we are obliged by our colleges to stand by our 'end results.' That is what Christ asked. Have any who have ever answered that challenge '*sans peur et sans reproche*' ever been deceived? To whom to-day in the light of history would the increasing wisdom of the world award the meed of having most wisely chosen? This is part of what Christ has meant to me.

CHAPTER VII

CHESS is the king of games. Its great squares leading across the board to the spot where every pawn may win a crown have always fascinated me. The sinister picture of God and the Devil moving the pawns about without their being consulted almost ruined it for me. But when Alice in her Wonderland wandered across my pathway, and I saw that the pieces moved themselves, the game became again to me a helpful parable. It enabled me to visualize somewhat the interest of Him whom I think of as watching its millions of pieces throughout the ages, as they work out their own destinies in the drama of life.

When first I visited Labrador, there was no lighthouse on its rock-bound coast, so a friend offered both the money to build one and to pay the salary of a keeper. However, the Government warned us that no private person may own a lighthouse, for possibly the man might let its light go out. Every year, with a thousand other vessels, I cruise along our rugged coastline. Each vessel sets

out full of high hopes of a successful voyage, a full fare, and afterward a hearty 'well done' from the satisfied owner of the craft, when, at the end of the venture, she has once more reached home. Alas! Our coast is strewn with wrecks. How many times have I myself sorely needed a pilot and guide to advise me what to do! How often have I struck my beloved little ship, because the coast pilot, who was all the guide we had, could not be depended upon!

We have been badly handicapped in our work for children, especially for the unfortunate tuberculous lying under the shadow of the Valley of Death, by the difficulty of letting the sunshine in, and at the same time keeping out the biting winds and raw cold from our polar current. The ordinary glass which we use for our windows oddly enough prevents the vital rays of the sun from passing through, though it is apparently clear and translucent. Our bodies, sorely in need, look out for these rays, but are betrayed, for little of value to human life comes through the windows. Lying on my table is a substance called 'Vitaglass.' It shields from danger and gives life-giving light at the same time.

Faith came to me with the vision of Christ still alive in this world to-day. I owe it to Him. He meant to me a determination, God helping me, to follow Him. Whither it led me I have tried to outline in this booklet. Certain it is that a life among fishermen was the last place I should have sought at twenty years of age with my background. Not one of my chums selected anything like it. I have tried to subordinate my will to His, and to play across the board as if He were directing my share in the game. True, my five senses have never made me conscious of His physical presence in hours of temptation, fear, discouragement, and doubt; but there are other senses to be relied upon, whether physical or spiritual I cannot say, because as a matter of fact neither I nor any man knows the difference. Thus I can account for, but cannot see, touch, hear, smell, or taste the force which makes my compass needle point toward the north except when deflected by some local mundane stronger line; nor can I account for or my senses perceive why baby seals always beat north in the dark frigid waters beneath the Arctic ice-fields, nor how polar bears and migrating birds follow

tracks which no mortal man can follow without outside help. All I know is that they get there.

The process of knowing one's self is a painful one. I remember undertaking to paint the ceiling in our new hospital sitting-room because I thought I could do it without staining the floor or the walls. I did my very best, but, alas! not only was I myself, but my friends were conscious of many stains made through my own fault. Moreover, glue had dropped into my own hair, and certainly I did not wish that! We all need a pilot stronger and better and braver and truer than ourselves, and experience teaches us of none who can compare with the Christ.

In this respect, what has Christ meant to me? — Christ who was the Man of all others who did things. Stanley Jones, in his 'Christ of the Indian Road,' exactly depicts my own conception of Him. Our Lord, he says, did not spend much time speculating or talking or writing books. He worked at the carpenter's bench. He fought temptation in the wilderness and put prayer into action. He healed the sick. He cast out devils. He wept with His friends. He treated women on an

equality. Girt with a towel, He washed the feet of fishermen. He personally went and mixed and ate with outcasts. He began His preaching at home. He transformed weak, ignorant, selfish, and cowardly men into heroes. He Himself brought heaven to earth wherever He was. His answer to John's disciples was, 'Go and tell what you see done.' He fed the hungry, visited the sick. Even His personal clothing He let go. When men smote Him, He turned the other cheek. He willingly walked all the way to Jerusalem, conscious that He was going to His Cross, so that on it He might bear the burdens of all other men. He was acquainted with sorrows. That made Him capable of being always the man who could smile; and He could weep also, and knew well how to laugh. He must have loved the repartee so wonderfully characteristic of His wisdom that has stood the test of ages. What a twinkle there must have been in His eyes!

If I don't understand how He walked on the water or how He raised the dead, I am perfectly content to pass on and wait to comprehend those things when I shall have acquired more wisdom than now. God forbid that I should try to circumscribe the

genius of greater men than I by the limits of my imperfect cerebral cells. I do not wish to be numbered with the mob who persecuted Galileo, fought Pasteur, tried to kill Lord Lister, drove Morton into his grave, pooh-poohed heavier-than-air aviation, ridiculed automobiles and even steam railways, sneered at Dr. Bell and his telephone dream as a lunatic, and refused to help the discoveries of radium and X-rays until those efforts took the form of dividend-paying shares on the stock market. 'The mark of greatness,' said Gladstone, 'is not how little, but how much, a man believes in.'

How does such a Christ help to reconsecration? He helps by setting the highest possible standards in Himself, by actually challenging us to look at Him and daring us to follow Him. That is the way to inspire mankind. That is what Christ has done for me a thousand times. Were I to hear Him say once to the fallen woman or to the traitor Judas, 'Go to hell with your sins,' or threaten punishment to His weakest follower, then it would all be different. I can understand His saying to the man who definitely refused to do anything with his talent, putting it away from beyond his

reach by burying it till his death, 'Take it away from him.' I understand a righteous judge summing up a closed life judicially by saying, 'You did nothing to help any one; neither the naked, the hungry, the sick, the down-and-outs, not even the children. Go to the place prepared for the Devil.' Such living is a negation of life. That is why also I can understand a plan of redemption which calls for any sacrifice for love, especially the divine love of which there is no fathoming the depth. Yes, it makes intelligible that which, for want of any better way of expressing it in human language, we call 'the sacrifice of God's only Son.' That, too, Christ means to me. I am conscious that for me my only hope of salvation in this world lies in Christ.

The faith in Christ upon which I have based my life has given me a light on life's meaning which has satisfied my mind, body, and soul. The hope that through that faith He would reveal a way of life here which justifies it has been more than answered; and it seems to me ever more reasonable to hold that it will 'carry on,' just as gloriously when we have passed beyond the limits of what material machines can reveal to us.

That the Love which has made itself conscious to me through forty-odd years, and has not failed even when I failed, should desert me when in the presence of God I shall need it most, is to me unthinkable. No. I do not know what redemption means, but, knowing myself, I cannot avoid realizing the necessity for it, nor can I see any reason why my glad acceptance of faith the only way I ever heard of should offend my intellect because I do not fully understand it.

Humility is an essential of all true science. Why not in this, the greatest of all? Pharpar and Abana are denied me. Am I foolish because I accept the waters of Jordan?

He who would valiant be
'Gainst all disaster,
Let him in constancy
Follow the Master.
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent;
His firm avowed intent
To be a Christian.

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